

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

JG972 U.S. PTO
09/769953
01/25/01

Assistant Commissioner
For Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97(b)(1) AND 1.98**

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(a), Applicant respectfully requests that this Information Disclosure Statement be entered and that the listed references be considered by the Examiner and made of record. Copies of the listed references are enclosed for the convenience of the Examiner.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.97, this Information Disclosure Statement is not to be construed as a representation that a search has been made, as an admission that the information cited herein is, or is considered to be, material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(b), or as a representation that no other possibly material information, as defined in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(b), exists.

Furthermore, the references listed on the attached Form 1449 are not to be construed as an admission that these references qualify as prior art as to the above-referenced application or any related application. Rather, these references are being presented for the Examiner's consideration without prejudice to Applicant's right to demonstrate that any of these references do not qualify as prior art should the Examiner choose to apply any of these references.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 25, 2001



Diana M. Sangalli
Reg. No. 40,798
Fletcher, Yoder & Van Someren
P.O. Box 692289
Houston, Texas 77269-2289
(281) 970-4545